

Conservation Working Group Meeting Minutes- June 19, 2001

There were 20 people in attendance at the meeting.

Announcements:

- Kaitilin informed the group that CMC has changed its name to The Ocean Conservancy.
- Molly announced that SOS (and other conservation groups) would be cosponsoring a public forum with presentations on the MLPA and the Management Plan Review on June 28th in Half Moon Bay.

Sanctuary Report: (Holly Price)

- Management Plan: The Sanctuary hopes to begin scoping in December 2001. Working groups will present their priority issues to SAC at October meeting.
- The SAC has a new official working group – the business and tourism group.
- SAC Retreat: will be in Cambria in August, also at August meeting SAC will receive update from department heads on their programs.
- Fishermen's Alliance : Alliance Reserve Subcommittee at data gathering stage. MBNMS is funding update of Rick Starr's work on status of fisheries, also has funding for socio-economic work. F&G MLPA maps should be available in early July.
- Fireworks: NMFS considers some fireworks a potential "take" of marine mammals – wants MBNMS to do programmatic env. review. Historic events likely to be grandfathered in.
- Pajaro River: flood control project in scoping, meeting 6/21 in Watsonville.
- BLM: hiring staff person, may co-locate with MBNMS.

CWG Membership and Protocols

Kaitilin gave a brief overview of the CWG protocols and announced current institutional members include: SOS, TOC, FOSO, Sierra Club (Santa Cruz and Ventana Chapters), ACS, MBA, CCC, WWF, MMC, Bay Net, Sanctuary Stewards and CWC. The Otter Project has noted their intent to step down from the CWG due to time constraints.

Management Plan Topics:

- Intertidal Zones-Rafe Sagarin, postdoc at Hopkins Marine Station, gave a presentation on intertidal zones in the Central Coast, focusing on his research at Hopkins. Mr. Sagarin noted the tremendous diversity of intertidal zones in the MBNMS, in terms of species, physical conditions, geologic conditions, wave exposure, etc. He also noted the range in external impacts depending on accessibility of areas to humans and terrestrial predators such as cats and raccoons. Mr. Sagarin noted that his research look at species diversity and distribution in an area of Hopkins that was originally studied in the 1930's. Comparing current to baseline conditions, he has seen a huge change in species composition with approx. half the species studied increasing in abundance and half decreasing and a marked increase in Southern species that correlates to increased temperatures over the past 60 years and especially the past 13 years. His research has been published in *Ecological Monographs* and in *Science*. Mr. Sagarin made the following recommendations:
 - (1) establishment of long-term monitoring sites for research purposes;
 - (2) increased educational/scientific partnerships;

- (3) more cohesive management and strengthened protection of intertidal areas;
- (4) establishment of networks of no-take reserves based on science
- (5) adequate signage and education to address “loving tidepools to death” issue.

Marine Life Protection Act: The CWG received updates on F&G hearing dates, the public forum in HMB, and Alliance efforts. The CWG brainstormed ideas for suggestions to the RAP regarding appropriate conservation goals for marine reserves. The group agreed to ask the RAP for input on the following issues: the status of scientific research related to conservation goals for marine reserves, the status of existing knowledge/research regarding MBNMS biodiversity, habitat protection, overall health assessment for living resources in various subregions of the Sanctuary. It was noted that the Alliance’s primary focus will be in reviewing marine reserves from a fisheries enhancement and socio-economic perspective and the CWG can assist in efforts to identify conservation goals and concerns.

- The July CWG meeting will address water quality issues.
- The CWG will hold a meeting on August 28th.